IN THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1.(Currently Amended) An optical scanning device for scanning an information layer of an optical record carrier, the device comprising:

a radiation source for generating a polarized radiation beam; ~~and~~

an objective system for converging the radiation beam on the information layer~~, wherein the device includes~~;

an optical element comprising at least two adjacent materials with a shaped interface between the materials, at least the first of the materials being birefringent, the second material having a refractive index substantially equal to the refractive index of the birefringent material at a predetermined angle; and

switchable beam rotation means arranged to controllably alter a polarization angle at which the polarized radiation beam is

incident on the optical element.

Claim 2 (Canceled)

3.(Currently Amended) ~~A~~ The device as claimed in ~~claim 2~~ claim 1, wherein said beam rotation means is arranged to rotate the optical element.

4.(Currently Amended) ~~A~~ The device as claimed in ~~claim 2~~ claim 1, wherein said beam rotation means is arranged to alter ~~the polarisation~~ the polarization angle of the ~~polarised~~ polarized radiation beam.

5.(Currently Amended) ~~A~~ The device as claimed in claim 1, wherein said second material is birefringent.

6.(Currently Amended) ~~A~~ The device as claimed in claim 1, wherein the second material has a refractive index n_s and the birefringent material has an ordinary refractive index n_o and an extraordinary refractive index n_e, wherein $n_e \geq n_s \geq n_o$ or $n_e \leq n_s \leq n_o$.

7.(Currently Amended) ~~A~~ The device as claimed in claim 1, wherein at least one of the first material and the second material is shaped as a lens.

8.(Currently Amended) ~~A~~ The device as claimed in claim 1, wherein at least one of said first material and said second material is shaped as at least one of a planoconcave lens and a planoconvex lens.

9.(Currently Amended) ~~A~~ The device as claimed in claim 1, wherein one of the two materials is shaped as a planoconvex lens and the other of the two materials is shaped as a mating planoconcave lens.

10.(Currently Amended) An optical component comprising:

at least two adjacent materials with a curved interface between the materials, at least the first of the materials being birefringent and the second material having a refractive index substantially equal to the refractive index of the birefringent material at a predetermined angle; and

a switchable beam rotation device configured to controllably

change a polarization angle at which a polarized radiation beam is incident on the optical element.

11. (Currently Amended) ~~An~~ The optical element as claimed in claim 10, wherein said interface is curved.

12. (Currently Amended) ~~An~~ The optical component as claimed in claim 10, wherein said first material comprises a ~~polymerised~~ polymerized anisotropically oriented liquid crystal.

13. (Currently Amended) ~~An~~ The optical component as claimed in claim 10, wherein at least one of the outer surfaces of the optical element is planar.

14. (Currently Amended) A method of manufacturing an optical scanning device for scanning an information layer of an optical record carrier, the information layer being covered by a transparent layer of thickness t_d and refractive index n_d, the method comprising the ~~steps~~ acts of:

providing a radiation source for generating a polarized radiation beam; and

~~providing an optical element,~~ switching a beam rotation device to controllably alter a polarization angle at which the polarized radiation beam is incident on an optical element;

the optical element comprising at least two adjacent materials with a shaped interface between the materials, at least the first of the materials being birefringent, the second material having a refractive index substantially equal to the refractive index of the birefringent material at a predetermined angle.

15. (Withdrawn) A method of manufacturing an optical component, the method comprising:

providing at least two adjacent materials with a shaped interface between the materials, at least the first material being birefringent and the second material having a refractive index substantially equal to one of the refractive indices of the birefringent material at a predetermined angle.

16. (Withdrawn) A method as claimed in claim 15, the method comprising:

placing a material between a substrate and a mould, the mould having a shaped surface, at least a portion of the shaped surface

having an alignment layer formed thereon, and the substrate having a first surface on which is formed a bonding layer;

bringing the mould and the substrate together so as to sandwich the material between the first surface of the substrate and the shaped surface of the mould;

polymerising the material so as to form said first material;

adhering the material to the bonding layer;

removing the substrate with the adhered polymerised material from the mould;

covering the shaped surface of the polymerised first material with a polymerisable further material; and

polymerising the further material so as to form the second material.

17.(New) The device of claim 1, wherein the switchable beam rotation means arranged to controllably alter the polarization angle by 90 degrees in a first state, and not alter the polarization angle in a second state.

18.(New) The device of claim 17, wherein the switchable beam rotation means comprises a twisted nematic cell, the first state

being an off state of the twisted nematic cell, and the second state being an on state of the twisted nematic cell.

19.(New) The method of claim 14, wherein the switching act controllably alters the polarization angle by 90 degrees in a first state, and not alter the polarization angle in a second state.

20.(New) The method of claim 19, wherein the switching act is performed by a twisted nematic cell, the first state being an off state of the twisted nematic cell, and the second state being an on state of the twisted nematic cell.